

REMARKS

BY

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AT THE

MEMORIAL CEREMONY FOR WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

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I am at once proud and saddened to be here today. Proud to share in remembering a brave and courageous man. Saddened -- again -- by his loss.

Those who worked with Bill Buckley at the Central Intelligence Agency have not forgotten his dedication, his courage, or his many contributions to intelligence. Nor will they.

One of Bill's friends, an officer who had known him for many years, observed, "Bill did things that none of the rest of us would have attempted." Throughout his years of service to his country -- including military service in Korea and Vietnam -- Bill did what he thought was needed. He led by example.

The world of intelligence involves risk -- necessary risks -- for without our willingness to undertake risk, we will fail. Risk and danger are integral parts of effective intelligence gathering.

Bill Buckley understood this and did not shy away from it. Bill routinely took on the most difficult missions -- missions where nothing was routine.

This was never more necessary than in his last assignment as Chief of Station in Beirut. During Bill's time there, Lebanon was in turmoil, armed militias fought for control of various areas, and the U.S. mission was under constant threat. Several months before he arrived, our embassy in West Beirut had been destroyed by a terrorist bombing. The environment was extremely hazardous; a simple trip across town was a trip through checkpoints manned by trigger-happy militias. Bill's success in collecting intelligence in situations of increasing danger was exceptional, even phenomenal.

Bill Buckley provided extraordinary service to his country. His record is a stunning list of accomplishments -- letters of appreciation and commendation, certificates of distinction and exceptional service, medals and citations from within and from outside the Central Intelligence Agency. But it is the living memory of the man we honor at this ceremony. To those for whom Bill worked, his direct approach to any problem was a distinct asset. He was known for his ability to handle tough situations. To those who worked for Bill, he was a man who expected much but gave much in return. He was fair-minded, sympathetic, and supportive of his staff. They sought his counsel and advice.

Bill Buckley made a difference to those who served with him; to those who benefitted and will continue to benefit from the risks he took; and to those who value discipline, integrity, and freedom.

As many of you know, we have an area in the main foyer of the Headquarters building designated as the "CIA Memorial Plaque." Beneath the inscription, "In honor of those members of the Central Intelligence Agency who gave their lives in the service of their country," is carved a star for each member of the Agency who lost his life while serving his country in the field of intelligence. The 51st star carved on the wall honors William F. Buckley -- a small but very meaningful recognition of his ultimate gift to his country.

Today as we honor Bill Buckley, we remember his courage, his decisiveness, and his leadership. And we acknowledge our debt to Bill and others who have struggled in the cause of freedom, so that we might live in a safer and better world.